ALL ACTION ISSUE STARRING:

GEN 13™

GEN 13™ NUMBER 4

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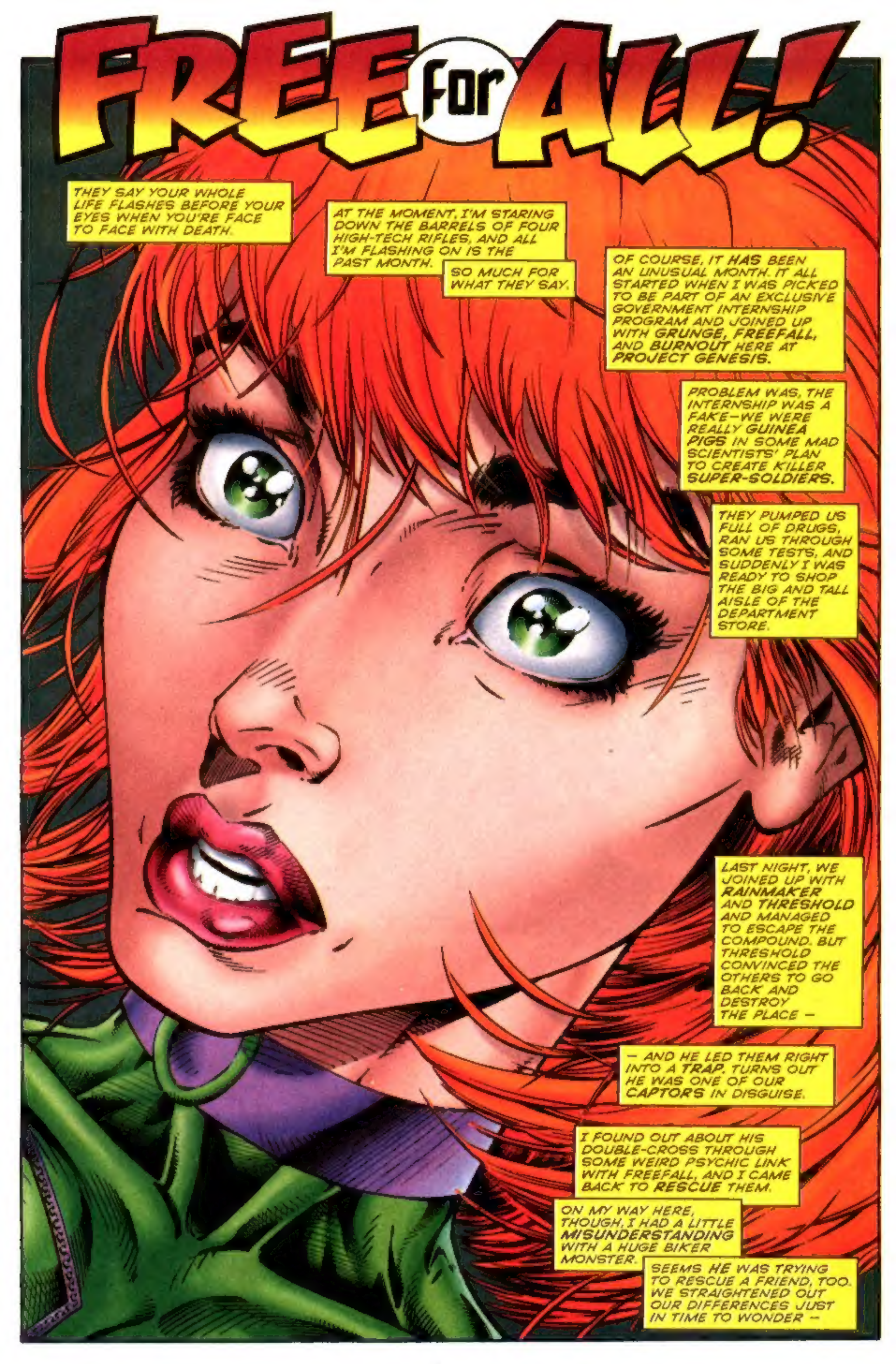
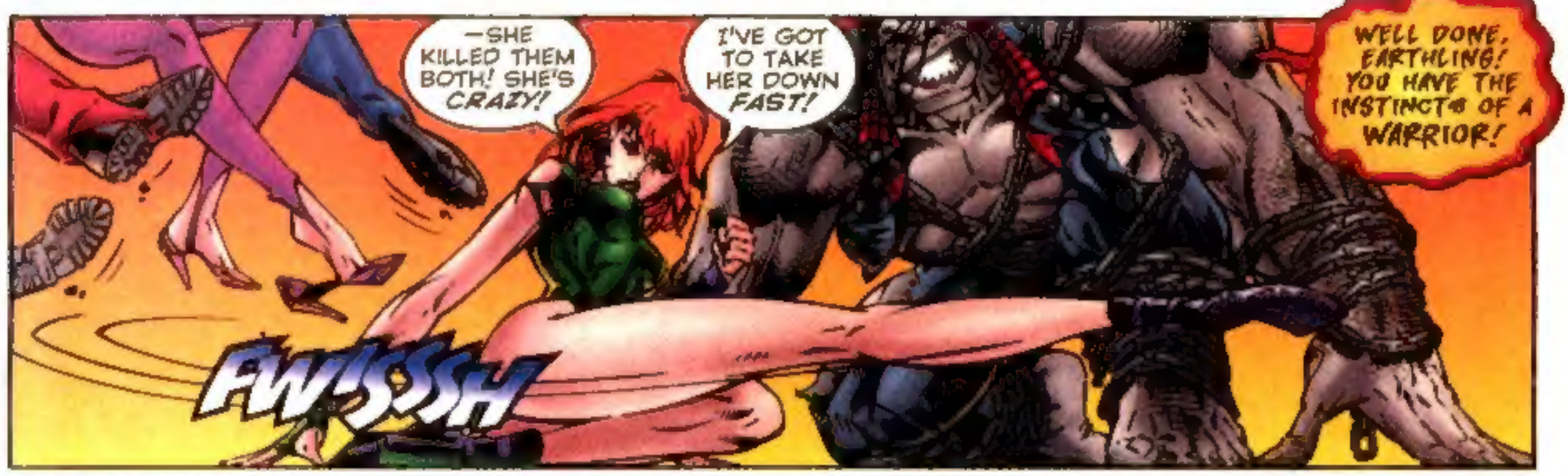

FREE For ALL!
THEY SAY YOUR WHOLE LIFE FLASHES BEFORE YOUR EYES WHEN YOU'RE FACE TO FACE WITH DEATH.
AT THE MOMENT, I'M STARING DOWN THE BARRELS OF FOUR HIGH-TECH RIFLES, AND ALL I'M FLASHING ON IS THE PAST MONTH.
SO MUCH FOR WHAT THEY SAY.
OF COURSE, IT HAS BEEN AN UNUSUAL MONTH. IT ALL STARTED WHEN I WAS PICKED TO BE PART OF AN EXCLUSIVE GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AND JOINED UP WITH GRUNGE, FREEFALL, AND BURNOUT HERE AT PROJECT GENESIS.
PROBLEM WAS, THE INTERNSHIP WAS A FAKE—WE WERE REALLY GUINEA PIGS IN SOME MAD SCIENTISTS' PLAN TO CREATE KILLER SUPER-SOLDIERS.
THEY PUMPED US FULL OF DRUGS, RAN US THROUGH SOME TESTS, AND SUDDENLY I WAS READY TO SHOP THE BIG AND TALL AISLE OF THE DEPARTMENT STORE.
LAST NIGHT, WE JOINED UP WITH RAINMAKER AND THRESHOLD AND MANAGED TO ESCAPE THE COMPOUND. BUT THRESHOLD CONVINCED THE OTHERS TO GO BACK AND DESTROY THE PLACE —
— AND HE LED THEM RIGHT INTO A TRAP. TURNS OUT HE WAS ONE OF OUR CAPTORS IN DISGUISE.
I FOUND OUT ABOUT HIS DOUBLE-CROSS THROUGH SOME WEIRD PSYCHIC LINK WITH FREEFALL, AND I CAME BACK TO RESCUE THEM.
ON MY WAY HERE, THOUGH, I HAD A LITTLE MISUNDERSTANDING WITH A HUGE BIKER MONSTER.
SEEMS HE WAS TRYING TO RESCUE A FRIEND, TOO. WE STRAIGHTENED OUT OUR DIFFERENCES JUST IN TIME TO WONDER —

— WHO'S GOING TO RESCUE US?
SO WHAT'S YOUR NAME, BIG GUY?
WHAT'RE YOU WAITING FOR, JACK? WE'VE CORNERED THE INTRUDERS—
—NOW KILL THEM!
THERE'S NO NEED FOR THAT, IVANA. I'VE GOT THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL.
THEY KNOW BETTER THAN TO RESIST US.
MACKENZIE, ESCORT OUR TWO GUESTS TO THE HOLDING CELLS.
YES, SIR.
THEY'RE DANGEROUS, JACK! ESPECIALLY THAT GIRL, FAIRCHILD! LOOK AT THE DAMAGE THEY'VE DONE!
TERMINATE THEM BOTH! NOW!
I AM CALLED PITT. MY CHAKRAN COMPANION IS KNOWN AS JEREB.
COMPANION? RIIIIGHT.
WELL, IF EITHER OF YOU'VE GOT ANY IDEAS, I'M OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS.
DON'T WORRY, IVANA.
I'LL TAKE THEM BOTH WITH ME IN THE MORNING.
WHAT?! THIS ENTIRE FACILITY HAS BEEN PUT AT RISK BECAUSE OF YOU! I WANT THIS SITUATION SANITIZED! DO YOU HEAR ME—

KILL THEM!
PITT, WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING WHILE THEY'RE STILL PREOCCUPIED WITH EACH OTHER!
FIGURED THAT OUT BY YOURSELF, DID YOU?
MIND YOUR MANNERS, PITT! FAIRCHILD IS A YOUNG HUMAN.

UH, SIR?!
STAND DOWN, MACKENZIE! BE REASONABLE, IVANA—
—THERE'S NO NEED FOR BLOODSHED!
SHUT UP, JACK! I'M GIVING THE ORDERS NOW!
LISTEN TO ME, BLACK RAZORS! YOU ARE TO PLACE MISTER LYNCH UNDER ARREST THIS MINUTE!
WE... WE CAN'T DO THAT... MA'AM.
UH-OH!
LOOKS LIKE TROUBLE.

IN THAT CASE...
HUH?!
WHA—
HARRGH!
HOURRGH!
...YOU CAN BOTH JUST DIE!
IVANA! NO!
PHRRRRP PHRRRP PHRRRRP PHRRRP
OH, MY GOD—


—SHE KILLED THEM BOTH! SHE'S CRAZY!
I'VE GOT TO TAKE HER DOWN FAST!
WELL DONE, EARTHLING! YOU HAVE THE INSTINCTS OF A WARRIOR!
FWISSSH

HEY!
BUMBLING FOOLS! STOP THEM BEFORE IT'S TOO—
THUD

IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE FOR YOU AND YOUR GOONS, IVANA!
MY FRIEND AND I ARE HERE TO STOP YOU ONCE AND FOR ALL!
YOU'RE AS DELUDED AS YOUR FATHER WAS, FAIRCHILD—
—THIS IS FAR FROM OVER!
CODE RED! CEN-COMM!

FWWWSSSSHHHH!
LET'S SEE HOW THE TWO OF YOU DO AGAINST ONE OF MY HEAVY WEAPONS SQUADS!
LISTEN UP, FREAKS! SURRENDER OR DIE!
KRAK
KKLIK
KCHAK
KCHAK
KKLIK
KKLIK
PITT, I THINK WE'RE IN TROUBLE!

SEVERAL LEVELS HIGHER...
WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
WE BUSTED OUT OF THRESHOLD'S TORTURE CHAMBER AND WALKED RIGHT INTO A DISASTER AREA.
IT'S GOT TO BE FAIRCHILD— SHE'S THE ONLY ONE I KNOW WHO CAN DO THIS KIND OF DAMAGE.
SHE MUST HAVE COME BACK TO RESCUE US, PAINBREAKER.
GRUNGE, MY NAME'S RAINMAKER.
RIGHT— SORRY ABOUT THAT.

SO WHAT'S THE FOUR-ONE-ONE ON THE KID, ROXY?
THE BOY'S NAME IS TIMMY.
HE SAYS FAIRCHILD AND A FRIEND OF HIS RAN INTO EACH OTHER AND GOT INTO A BIG FIGHT BY MISTAKE.
HIS NAME'S PITT, AND HE WAS TRYING TO HELP ME.
LOOKS LIKE THEY ENDED UP TAKING THE EXPRESS ELEVATOR DOWN.

UH-OH! THAT SOUNDS LIKE TROUBLE!
FAIRCHILD AND PITT MUST HAVE COME ACROSS SOME KEEPERS DOWN THERE!
BRRKRRP
BRRKRRP
WHAM
WE GOTTA HELP HER, BURNOUT.
GRUNGE IS RIGHT, FOR ONCE—BUT WE NEED A PLAN! WE CAN'T JUST BARGE HEADFIRST INTO A BUNCH OF KEEPERS.
SKRAASH

HOW ABOUT IF WE SOFTEN THEM UP A BIT...
...WITH A PLASMA BLAST!
FSSSH

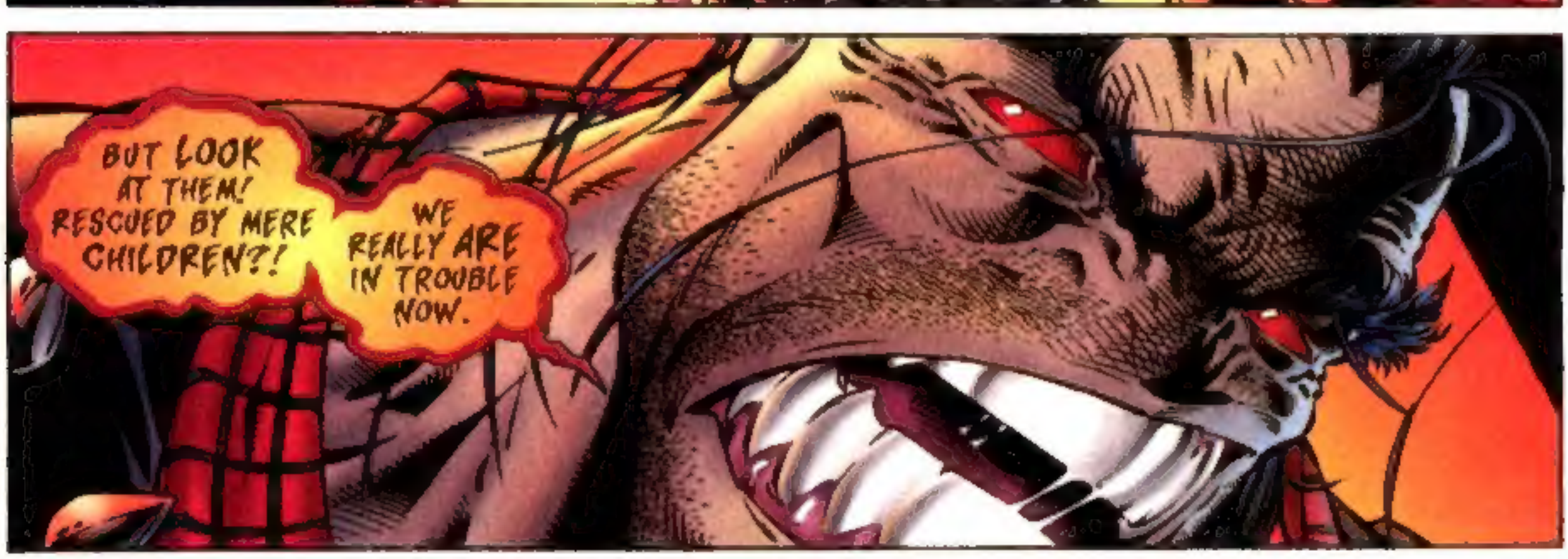
GOOD ANSWER, BURNOUT!
I'LL JUICE IT UP A LITTLE WITH A CONTAINMENT FIELD OF PRESSURIZED AIR—
KRACKLE
THAT THING'S REALLY GONNA BLOW WHEN IT HITS!

—AND SHOOT IT DOWN ON A JET STREAM.
YOU KNOW, THAT WAS JUST WHAT I WAS THINKING WE OUGHT TO DO, WINDBREAKER.
IT'S RAINMAKER, YOU REALITY-IMPAIRED BARNEY!
FWOOOOSH
AAGH!
I HOPE CAITLIN'S GOT HER SUN BLOCK 2000 ON!
YEEEAAAAGH!
WHA BOOM!

THAT SHOULD'VE DONE THE TRICK!
FOLLOW ME!
NO PROBLEM, BURNOUT!
I'LL JUST USE MY LEVITATION POWERS TO FLOAT US ALL DOWN BEHIND YOU!
YEEEE-HAAAAWW!
IT'S LIKE BUNGEE-JUMPING WITHOUT A CORD! LET'S GO, DRAINMAKER!
LISTEN UP, CONFUCIUS—FOR THE LAST TIME, MY NAME'S RAINMAKER!
OH, FORGET IT. JUST CALL ME SARAH.
UHH, SURE... WHATEVER YOU SAY, FARRAH.
BOBBY, ROXY, GRUNGE, SARAH—YOU GUYS ARE ALL RIGHT?
BUT I GOT A PSYCHIC MESSAGE THAT YOU WERE BEING TORTURED BY THRESHOLD!
WHAK
UNNGH!
WE WERE, CAITLIN—UNTIL GRUNGE MANIFESTED HIS POWERS AND SAVED THE DAY!
GRUNGE?!
BELIEVE IT, FAIRCHILD.
I'M THE MAN WITH THE PLAN, CAITLIN—HERE TO SAVE YOU FROM THESE K'EEPER CHEESE-HEADS!
OH, RIGHT—SO NOW IT'S YOUR PLAN!

WELL, I'M JUST GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE ALL OKAY.
LET'S SAVE THE TEARFUL REUNION FOR LATER—
—WE'VE GOT A JOB TO DO HERE!

WHAT'S THIS?! MORE SOLDIERS?
NO, THESE ARE MY FRIENDS. THEY'VE COME TO HELP US.
PITT DOESN'T NEED ANY--
THEY ARE OUR ALLIES, PITT! TREAT THEM ACCORDINGLY.
-GACK!-
GRRRR!
AS YOU WISH, CHAKRAN.


BUT LOOK AT THEM! RESCUED BY MERE CHILDREN?!
WE REALLY ARE IN TROUBLE NOW.

HEY, THERE BOYS! LOOKING FOR A GOOD TIME?
STAY WHERE YOU ARE, FREAK!
THEY MAY WANT YOU ALIVE, BUT THEY'LL STILL TAKE YOU DEAD.

COME ON, GUYS
COULD YOU BIG BAD, STORMTROOPERS REALLY HURT LITTLE OLD ME?

I THINK NOT!
SO LIGHTEN UP CRETIN MAGGOTS! TAKE A LOAD OFF!
WHOOOAAA!
YEEAGH!
PU-PUT US DOWN!
C'MON, YOU GUYS HAVE GOTTA LEARN TO RELAX!
ARRGH!
UUNNGH!
FWWWSSH!
NOW WHY DON'T THE TWO OF YOU REALLY GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER!

BONUS!
THIS SUPER-HERO STUFF 'S A CAKE-WALK.
NOW YOU'RE PLAYING W TH POWER, ROXY!
BUT WATCH A MASTER OF MART AL ARTS BUST SOME MOVES!
I'M GONNA THRASH THE REST OF THESE CHEESEHEADS WITHOUT EVEN USING MY POWER!
HAA!!!
WOK
YEEAAH!
WAK
WHAA!
WAK
KIAI!!
AND THAT'S THE LAST OF THEM
TOO WICKED!

BLAM BLAM BLAM
AARGH!
I— GUESS— I MISSED— ONE

GRUNGE!

GRUNGE! Y—YOU— IDIOT!
YOU'RE NOT INVUL- NERABLE!
NOW JUST STAY STILL. IT'LL BE ALL RI—
THEY GOT ME, ROX I'M FINISHED. GO ON. WITHOUT ME GET OUT OF HERE WHILE YOU STILL—
BLAM BLAM BLAM

AARGH! THE PAIN'S GETTING WORSE!
UH GRUNGE YOUR WOUNDS!
THEY THEY'RE
WUP
WUP
WOOP

AARGH!
GONE!
ZMMM
ZMMM
ZMMM

HEY, YOU'RE RIGHT! THE PAIN'S GONE, TOO!
HOLD IT! —: BRRRRP :—
PTUI
PTUI
PTUI
WOULD YOU LOOK AT THAT?!

I JUST SPIT OUT THE BULLETS! AND THEY'RE STILL WARM!
GNARLY!
GRUNGE, BABY, THAT'S JUST SO MONDO RAD!

MEANWHILE, BACK UP-STAIRS, TIMMY AWAITS THE RETURN OF PITT AND HIS OTHER NEW-FOUND FRIENDS

WOW! I HOPE THEY'RE ALL RIGHT DOWN THERE

GRRRR

SKRRASH

WHAM

I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT THEM, KID

YOU'VE GOT PROBLEMS OF YOUR OWN.

KCHAK

UH-OH!

PITT I'VE FOUND THE BOY

WE'VE GOT TO -

HEEELP!

I KNOW WHAT MUST BE DONE, CHAKRAN!

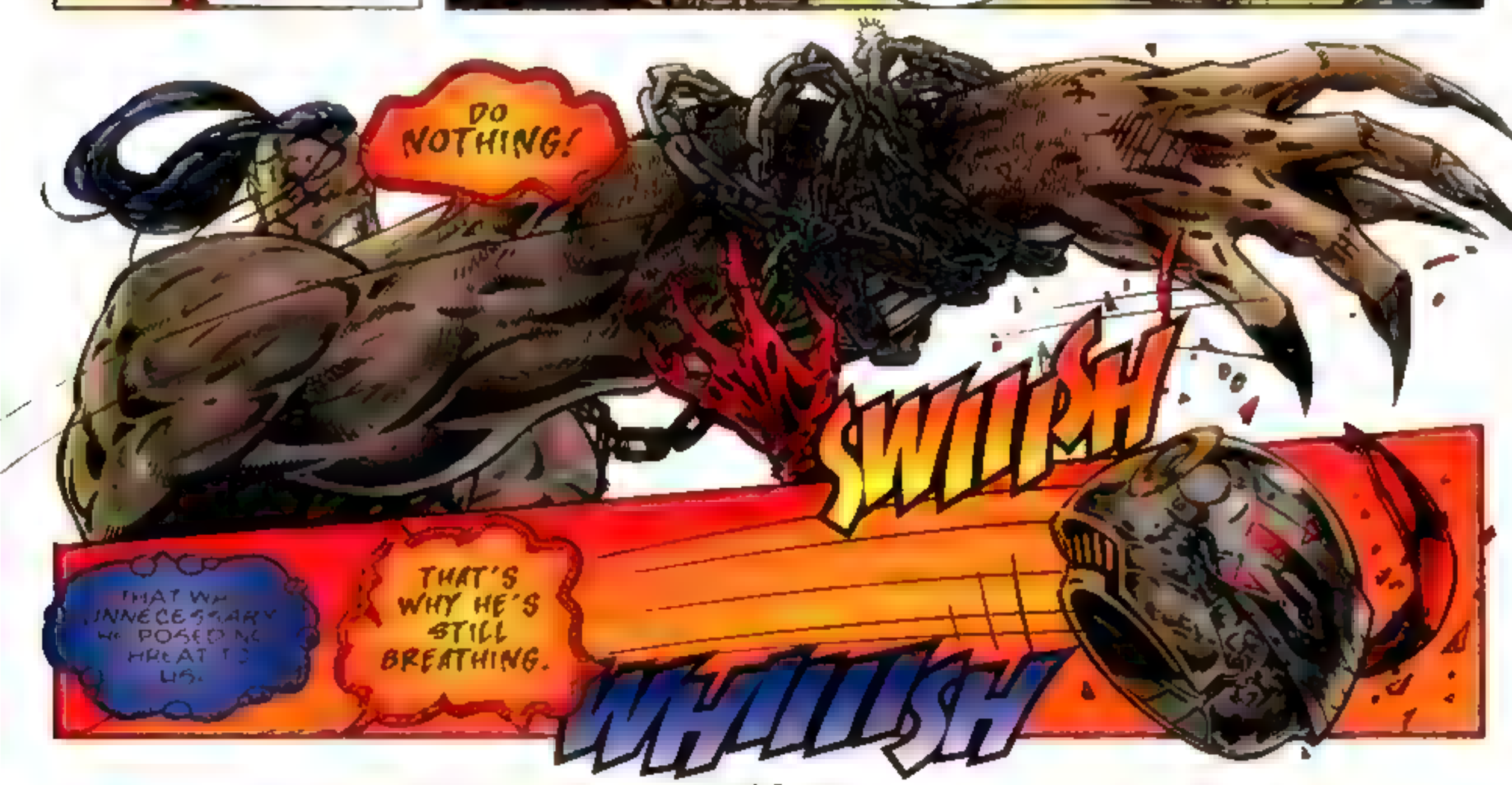
WOOSH

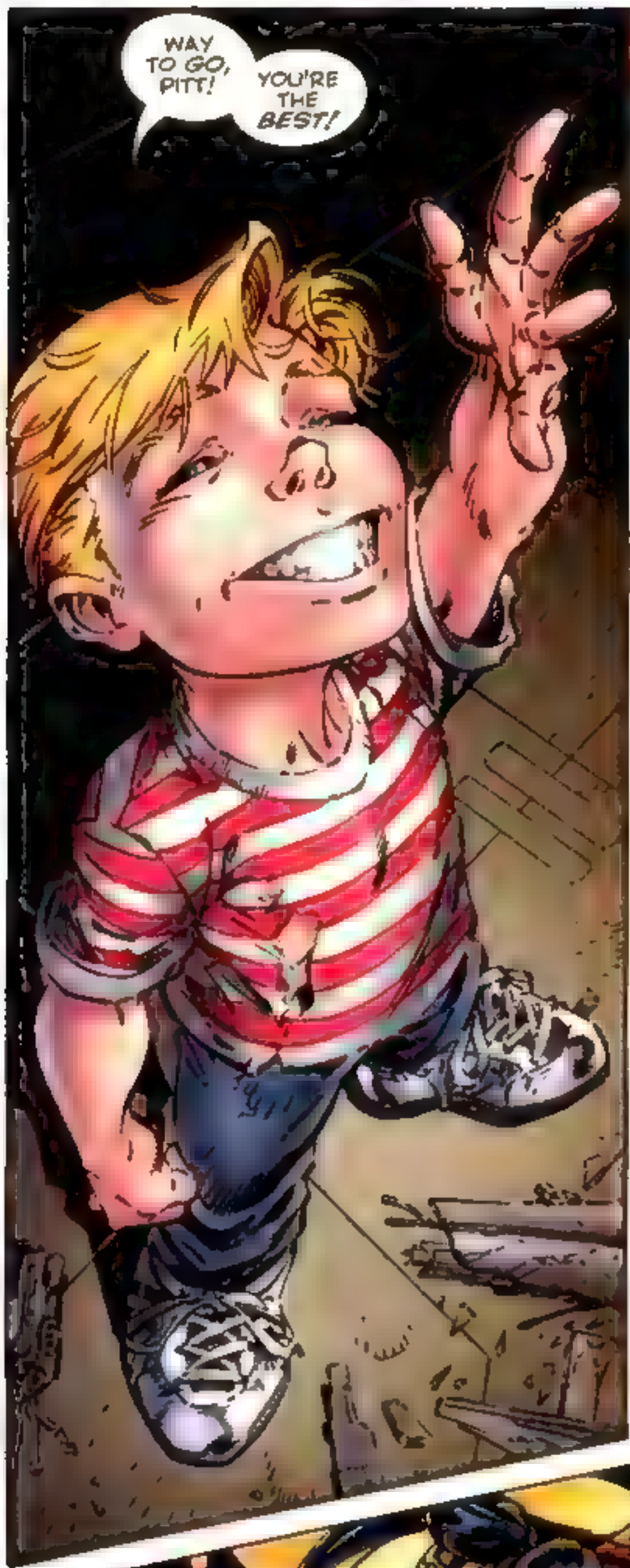
OMIGOD!

AWESOME!

WHA—WHAT THE HELL IS THAT THING?
THAT'S MY FRIEND PITT! NOW YOU'RE

S-STAY BACK! DO YOU HEAR ME? DON'T MAKE ME—
HURT THE BOY? I DON'T THINK SO.
NOT IF YOU VALUE YOUR OWN LIFE, EARTH-LING.
ONLY A HUMAN.
DROP YOUR WEAPON AND RELEASE THE CHILD HUMAN, AND YOU REMAIN UNHARMED.
WHAT?! WHO SAID THAT?
THAT'S PITT'S FRIEND, JEREB.
I'D LISTEN TO THEM IF I WERE YOU.
SHUT UP, KID! I'M WARNING YOU! ONE MORE STEP AND I'LL—

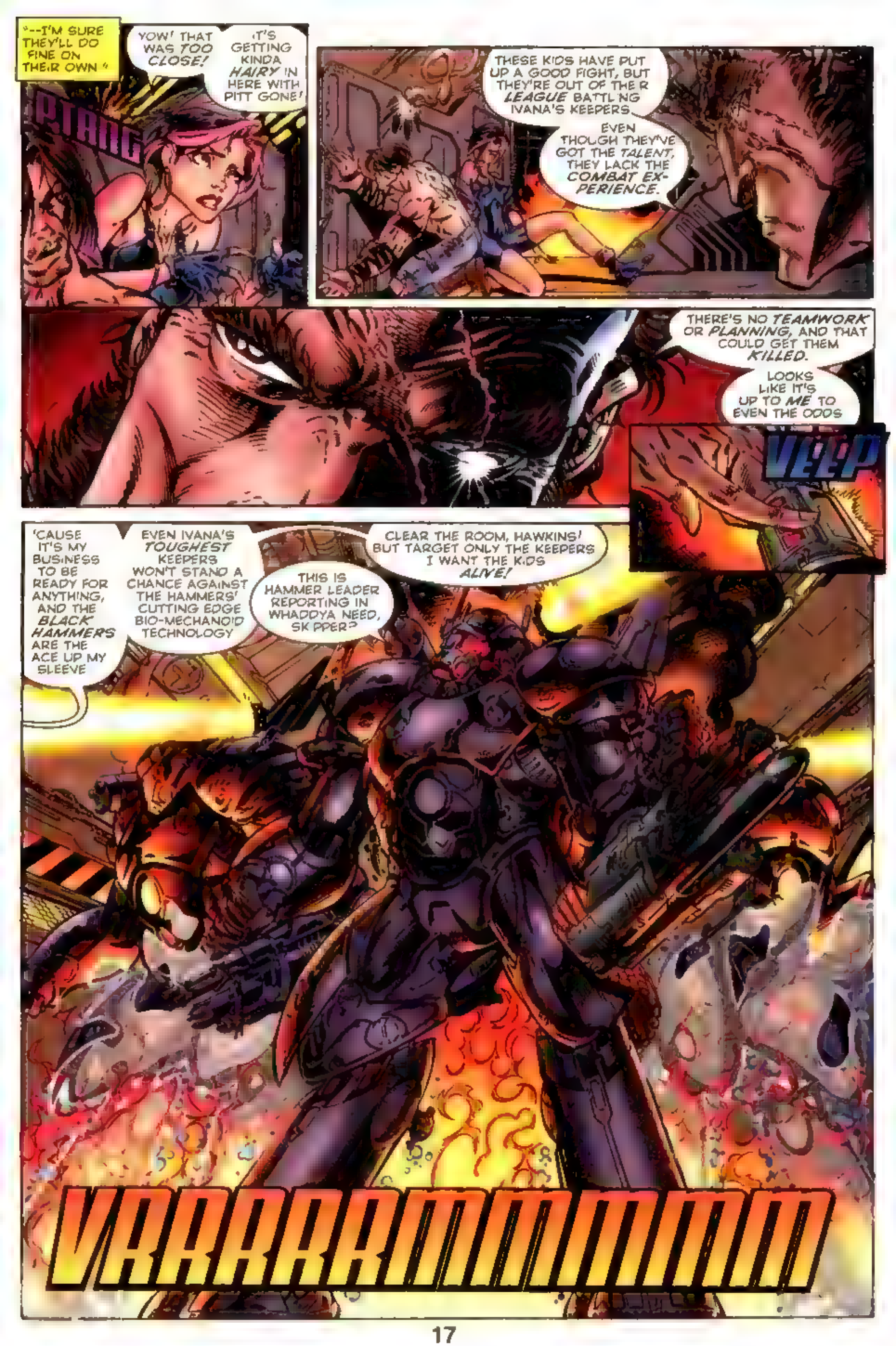

DO NOTHING!
SWIISH
WHIIISH
THAT WAS UNNECESSARY. HE POSED NO THREAT TO US.
THAT'S WHY HE'S STILL BREATHING.


WAY TO GO, PITT!
YOU'RE THE BEST!

WELL...
IT'S TIME WE GOT YOU BACK HOME, TIMMY
BUT HOW'RE WE GOING TO GET OUT OF HERE?
THERE ARE GUARDS EVERY-WHERE!
TIMMY'S RIGHT. THIS FACILITY IS A LABYRINTH IT COULD TAKE ALL NIGHT TO FIND OUR WAY OUT.

JUST LEAVE THAT TO ME!
WHAM
SKKRASSH

THERE - AN EMERGENCY EXIT.
BUT IT WOULD APPEAR THAT WE'RE ATOP SOME MOUNTAIN COMPLEX.
GEE, PITT, IT SURE IS A LONG WAY DOWN
COULDN'T WE TAKE THE ELEVATOR OR SOMETHING?
THAT'S NO PROBLEM.
WE WON'T BE HEADING IN THAT DIRECTION, ANYWAY.
WHOOOSH
TOTALLY COOL!
BUT WHAT ABOUT CAITLIN AND HER FRENDS? ARE THEY GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT?
THE BATTLEFIELD IS NO PLACE FOR A CHILD.
BESIDES, THEY'RE GOOD WARRIORS


"--I'M SURE THEY'LL DO FINE ON THEIR OWN."
YOW! THAT WAS TOO CLOSE!
IT'S GETTING KINDA HAIRY IN HERE WITH PITT GONE!
PTANG
THESE KIDS HAVE PUT UP A GOOD FIGHT, BUT THEY'RE OUT OF THEIR LEAGUE BATTLING IVANA'S KEEPERS.
EVEN THOUGH THEY'VE GOT THE TALENT, THEY LACK THE COMBAT EXPERIENCE.
THERE'S NO TEAMWORK OR PLANNING, AND THAT COULD GET THEM KILLED.
LOOKS LIKE IT'S UP TO ME TO EVEN THE ODDS
VEEP
'CAUSE IT'S MY BUSINESS TO BE READY FOR ANYTHING, AND THE BLACK HAMMERS ARE THE ACE UP MY SLEEVE
EVEN IVANA'S TOUGHEST KEEPERS WON'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST THE HAMMERS' CUTTING EDGE BIO-MECHANOID TECHNOLOGY
THIS IS HAMMER LEADER REPORTING IN WHADDYA NEED, SKIPPER?
CLEAR THE ROOM, HAWKINS! BUT TARGET ONLY THE KEEPERS I WANT THE KIDS ALIVE!
VRRRRRMMMMM

YOU HEARD HIM, BOYS—
—LET'S GET TO WORK!
RRMMMMBL
AAGH!
YEAARGH!

WHO THE HECK *ARE* THESE GUYS?
HEY!
STAY *DOWN!*
YOU?! GET AWAY FROM ME OR I'LL—
WAIT— YOU DON'T *UNDER-STAND.*
I'M HERE TO *HELP* YOU, FARCHILD

BUT I SAW YOU WITH *IVANA!*
YOU'RE A *PART* OF ALL THIS
I CAME HERE TO *STOP* HER AND THESE EXPERIMENTS

NO! THIS IS SOME KIND OF *TRICK!*
LISTEN TO ME, CAITLIN! MY NAME IS JOHN LYNCH,
I WAS A FRIEND OF YOUR FATHER'S
YOU KNEW MY FATHER?

YES. A LONG TIME AGO
PLEASE, CAITLIN, WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME— YOU'VE *GOT* TO TRUST ME!

ALL RIGHT. SO WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

"FIRST WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE IVANA SENDS MORE RE NFORCE-MENTS, FA RCHILD"

"MY MEN ARE THE BEST, BUT THEY CAN'T HOLD HER *KEEPERS* BACK FOREVER"

HAWKINS, LAY DOWN A SUPPRESSING FIRE WHILE WE GO FOR THE SOUTH EXIT

RRMMMBL

RRMMMMBL

COPY THAT, SKIPPER WE GOT YOU COVERED.

WHAT'RE YOU DOING?

KEEP MOVING!

I'M SHUTTING THE SHIELD DOORS TO SLOW DOWN THE KEEPERS!

YOU SURE WE CAN *TRUST* THIS GUY, CAITLIN?

R GHT NOW, ROXY, HE'S THE ONLY FRIEND WE'VE GOT

HE LOOKS L KE JUST ANOTHER GOVERNMENT SUIT TO ME

IF YOU WANT MY OPINION, WE OUGHTTA JETTISON HIM AS SOON AS WE GET THE CHANCE

I'M REALLY GETTING *TIRED* OF ALL THIS RUNN NG

ARE YOU TIRED OF *LIVING*, TOO, BURNOUT?

SARAH'S GOT A *POINT*.

SO WHAT'S THIS DUDE'S *STORY*, KAT? WHAT DOES HE *WANT* FROM US?

DO YOU HAVE ANY *ANSWERS* FOR US, MISTER LYNCH?

YOU KIDS REPRESENT THE FINAL PHASE OF PROJECT GENESIS
BUT THE FIRST EXPERIMENTS BEGAN LONG BEFORE YOU WERE EVEN BORN
THE COLD WAR WAS AT A BOIL AND THREATENING TO TURN THIS WORLD INTO A FLAMING NUCLEAR BRIQUETTE
BACK THEN, I WAS WORKING FOR A CERTAIN GOVERNMENT AGENCY CALLED INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS
ITS PRIME DIRECTIVE WAS TO MAKE THE WORLD A SAFER PLACE FOR AMERICAN INTERESTS
MY JOB WAS TO TRAVEL TO GLOBAL HOT SPOTS EXTINGUISHING CRISES AND THEREBY SAFEGUARDING OUR NATIONAL SECURITY.
TO FIGHT THIS PRIVATE LITTLE WAR, I ASSEMBLED A GROUP OF AMERICA'S FINEST SOLDIERS OUR FIERCEST WARRIORS.
WE WERE KNOWN AS TEAM 7.
THESE MEN WERE YOUR FATHERS.
OUR MISSION WAS TO NEUTRALIZE AMERICA'S ENEMIES—AND WE WERE THE BEST.
BUT ONE DAY THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED IT COULD MAKE US EVEN BETTER.
THE DIRECTOR OF I.O. WANTED HIS OWN TEAM OF SUPER-POWERED AGENTS, JUST LIKE THE YOUNGBLOOD.
AND BY EXPOSING US TO THE GEN-FACTOR, WE BECAME THE GEN-12.
WE GOT POWERS, ALL RIGHT, BUT WE WERE NEARLY DESTROYED IN THE PROCESS.
THE LUCKY ONES DIED ON THE FIRST DAY.
SOME OF THE LESS FORTUNATE WENT MAD AND ENDED UP KILLING THEMSELVES.
THE REST OF US SURVIVED.

BUT ALL THAT WAS JUST THE *BEGINNING* OF THE NIGHTMARE.
LATER ON, SOME OF THE MEN OF TEAM 7 GOT DISILLUSIONED WITH THE JOB AND DECIDED THEY'D HAD ENOUGH OF THE KILLING AND BLOODSHED. THEY TRIED TO LEAVE AND GO BACK TO A *NORMAL* LIFE.
SO THE RENEGADES WENT UNDERGROUND TO A PLACE THEY CALLED "*SANCTUARY*" IN ORDER TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES.
BUT NOT ALL OF THEM MADE IT.
I.O. UTILIZED BLACK RAZOR TEAMS TO HUNT DOWN THE MEMBERS OF TEAM 7 AND PERSUADE THEM TO RETURN.
WHEN THAT DIDN'T WORK, THEY SIMPLY NEUTRALIZED THEM...
...LEAVING THE CHILDREN AT I.O.'S MERCY.
THE FEW WHO SURVIVED THE TRAUMA WERE BRAINWASHED AND PROGRAMMED INTO BECOMING NEW OPERATIVES FOR PROJECT GENESIS.
BUT I.O WASN'T *ABOUT* TO LET *THAT* HAPPEN.
THEIR SCIENTISTS HAD DISCOVERED THAT SOME OF THE CHILDREN OF THE GEN-ACTIVE MEN *ALSO* POSSESSED SUPER POWERS.
SOMEHOW THE GEN-FACTOR HAD BEEN PASSED DOWN FROM PARENT TO CHILD, AND I.O. WAS DETERMINED TO *GET* THESE KIDS.
I'M GUESSING THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO THRESHOLD AND HIS SISTER, BLISS.
I THOUGHT THE WITCHHUNT FOR THE OTHER GEN 13 KIDS WAS OVER YEARS AGO...
...BUT I WAS WRONG.

THE FIRST THING WE'VE GOT TO DO IS GET YOU ALL AWAY FROM HERE. THIS WASTE DISPOSAL CHUTE WILL GET YOU OUTSIDE THE COMPLEX.

WASTE PROCESS

NOW MOVE IT! I'LL CATCH UP WITH YOU LATER.

BUT WHY ARE *YOU* HELPING US, MISTER LYNCH?

BECAUSE I'VE *BEEN* WHERE YOU ARE NOW, FAIRCHILD.

I *KNOW* WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HAVE YOUR *LIFE* TAKEN AWAY AND CONTROLLED BY OTHERS...

...AND I'M NOT ABOUT TO LET IT HAPPEN TO *YOU*.

NOW, YOU'D BETTER HURRY UP AND GET *GOING*.

OH, THIS IS JUST *TOO* DISGUSTING! THERE'S CRUD ALL *OVER* THIS THING.

I CAN'T *BELIEVE* WE HAVE TO JUMP INTO A PILE OF TRASH!

HEY, I GUESS THAT MAKES US WASTED YOUTH, HUH?

YOU KNOW, I'M NOT SURE WHICH IS WORSE, GRUNGE— YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR OR THE SMELL COMING UP THIS DISPOSAL CHUTE!

BUT WHAT ABOUT *YOU*?

ME?

KLAHAM

I'VE GOT A *SCORE* TO SETTLE WITH IVANA.

TO BE CONTINUED...

TALKIN' 'BOUT MY GENERATION

JEFF MARIOTTE/EDITOR
C/O HOMAGE STUDIOS, 10606-B CAMINO RUIZ, STE. 209, SAN DIEGO, CA 92126

Dear Gen[13],

I am a stressed-out college student with no relief from quadratic equations or quantum physics except for one simple item: your wonderful comic. When I realized that Gen[13] was only going to be a limited series, I grabbed the first drop slip I could. Without Gen[13] I knew I would not be able to make it another year.

My Mom and Dad are expecting me to graduate in one year, and with good reason, since they have paid for most of my education. You wouldn't let two hard-working parents be disappointed because their son dropped out of school, would you?

So, at the risk of sounding desperate, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE continue Gen[13] so that I can make it through one more year of school! I know my parents would appreciate it, as would I.
See you in a month, right?

Jason Zwetsch
Brockport, NY

P.S. I do plan to attend law school, so if it is not a problem maybe you could keep it up for a few more years past my graduation. Then there is the job I'll get, maybe a house, a wife, etc.

How's this for a start, Jason. The issue you're holding in your sweaty little hands is #4 — but is the miniseries ending here? No way! As I mentioned last time out, we're extending the miniseries into another issue so we can finish telling this awesome story. And then Gen[13] #0 hits the racks! Who knows what happens next? Maybe the Earth will be crushed by a gigantic meteor... or maybe there'll be a regular series. It's definitely one of the two!
By the way, when you do get a wife, don't tell her she was third on your priority list. Just some friendly advice...

Dear GENiuses,

I've only read two issues of GEN[13] so far, but it's already one of my favorite books. When I heard about this new WildStorm comic, I thought it was going to be another one of those action comics filled with high-tech villains with big guns, heroic half-nude babes, and hunks with bigger guns. And, well, that's what it is! But I really liked it. Jeff Campbell is one of Image's greatest artists. I daresay he's as good as Jim Lee. And Lee/Choi/Mariotte make an outstanding writing team.

What I really liked about this book is that all the characters are equally interesting. In most other team books I've read, there are always one or two characters who are especially boring, and one or two who are especially interesting. But not in Gen[13]. Fairchild, Grunge, Freefall, and Burnout are all favorites!

Just one question: Is Rainmaker going to be a permanent member of the team?

Thank you for a very enjoyable comic book. You're doing a great job, all of you: Jim, Brandon, Jeff Campbell, Alex, Jeff, Ken, Joe, Bill, and everyone else. We're behind you all the way!

Trond Sœtre
Garhaug, Norway

I guess this shows that quality is recognized everywhere. Thanks for getting in touch from so far away, Trond.

Dear Gen[13],

I've finally found the Image Comic of my dreams. You have a Gen-Fanatic on your hands. The Gen[13] advertisements caught my eye, especially the one with Fairchild holding up the tank. That's what drew my interest first. When I saw the fantastic art and storyline, I was hooked.

In issue #2, I was reading some of the other readers' responses. I say leave Fairchild the way she is. She's big, beautiful, and strong. She's great! I agree that Freefall should quit smoking. Burnout is bad to the bone, and Grunge is trip, the clown of the group. Why do I have the feeling that Rainmaker is either one of the bad guys, like Threshold, or she's going to be killed? I just don't see her as a permanent member of the group.

Well, anyway, I'm sold. Keep them coming. And I say make it a regular series!

Gen[13] forever,
Michael Wright
Jacksonville, FL

Michael, Rainmaker is a permanent member of the team, so get used to her. We've decided she's kinda nice to have around. Besides, you never know when you're going to want a little help with the weather...

Dear Gen[13],

I just finished reading issue #3 and I'm speechless! J. Scott Campbell is amazing! Alex put a great finish on his pencils. Joe Chiodo must be the best colorist in Image, if not in all of comicdom. Kudos to Jim Lee and Brandon Choi for an awesome story. I loved the way Jeff drew Pitt. He seems to be the only person who knows how to draw Pitt (besides Dale Keown).

Okay, enough praise — get back to work!

Your #1 fan,
Micah Gunnell
Frederick, MD

P.S. Please, please, please, please, please, please, make Gen[13] a regular series! You can count on me to buy 'em all. Keep up the good work!

Okay. Because you asked so nicely. Everybody else, when you buy Gen[13] #6 in a few months, be sure to thank Micah!

Dear Gen[13],

Thank you for creating the title Gen[13], and for naming it after me. Your timing is excellent, because I am 13 this year. Just coincidence, of course, but cool anyway.

Until Gen[13], the only other comic with my name in it was Barefoot Gen, a Japanese manga about a young Hiroshima atomic bomb survivor. I bought all the Barefoot Gen stories while I lived in Tokyo, and I'm looking forward to collecting every issue of Gen[13].

Thanks again for a great title and fantastic artwork by J. Scott Campbell.

A Gen[13] fan,
Gen Garfield
Somerville, MA

Does this mean we have to change the name of the book every time you have a birthday?

Dear Gen[13],

When I picked up my first John Byrne book, I thought, "Now this guy is king." But one can only sit on the throne for so long before the next generation wants to try the crown on for size. Along comes Jim Lee, and I'll be darned, the crown fits like it was made for him. The way I figured, it'd be another ten or fifteen years before the next generation decided to show its stuff.

I guess what I'm trying to say is that I didn't expect someone like Jeffery Scott Campbell to come along until the year 2005. I imagine if he wanted to, he could reinvent the wheel. His stuff is that good... truly original with real flavor.

Leonard Botley
Tacoma, WA

Aww, Leonard. Now we have to hide this issue from Jeff, and he gets so fussy when we do that. Next time dis him a little, will ya?

Dear Gen-guys,

Hi! I'm a big fan of Gen[13] and I just wanted to write and tell you that you've created an impressive comic. Great characters plus unique powers equal a hot series! I think all the people who participated in Gen[13]'s creation should be given a thumbs up for excellence! Keep up the terrific work and more power.

Gen-fan,
Benny Garcia
San Diego, CA

So you're probably the guy I see standing on the corner by McDonald's with his thumbs up in the air, right? Next time I'll say howdy!

And we're out of room. See you in thirty for the grand finale to this whole miniseries thing!

I was reading my second favorite comic fanzine the other day, and I came upon an item that grabbed my interest. Though I normally try to let my artwork do my talking, this particular piece was so interesting I thought I should address it in front of a wide audience, so I'm climbing out from behind my drawing board to speak to my fellow Gen13 fans. The magazine that accompanies some really nice poly-bagged trading cards printed their theories on what makes a book— a book like Gen13, for example— hot. The so-called formula for success advocated by this "guide to comics" is a four-fold plan. I was amused by the simplicity of this formula, and wondered if there were any way it might account for the current success of Gen13. What follows is their plan and my own conclusions:

1. Fill the cast with teenagers; kids relate to this.

1. Duh!!! (Hey, wait a second! If teen books sell, why is Team Titans being cancelled? And how come Todd McFarlane's book is constantly number 1 on the charts? I thought Spawn was an older guy.)

2. Clad the babes in the groups as scantily as possible to capture the pervert market.

2. Perverts, huh? I guess Wizard is referring to you people reading this. Hmmmm... I wonder if this rule applies to comic book fanzines, as well. Anyone know if the Catwoman-sticking-her-butt-in-your-face cover or the nice fold-out T&A shot of the X-Babes helped sell any more fanzines?

3. Get a guy who draws like Jim Lee to pencil it.

3. I don't draw like Jim Lee. It should be obvious I'm an Art Adams clone. Sheesh— get it straight, guys.

4. Hype it up almost a year in advance, do a #1/2 issue, and preview several pages in Wizard.

4. Looks like we won't be wasting our advertising dollars that way again.

Well, there you go. An interesting theory, and I'd be interested in hearing what you have to say about it. Do you think comics publishers can really grind popular comics out just by following some simple formula, or do you think there's more to it than that? Come to think of it, do you think magazine publishers can just grind out successful magazines by following a simple formula, like, say, the following:

1. Put a bunch of limited-edition trading cards and other collectibles in the magazine.
2. Print a price guide with ridiculously inflated prices, so people think the comics they just bought for cover price are really worth a bundle of money. (Hint— ever try selling one of those hot comics for what these fanzines says they're worth?) I guess now Gen13 will always be listed at cover-price. Lucky for you guys, huh?
3. Get the hottest artists in comics to contribute covers. Make sure everyone knows they're the hottest artists by making up a list and putting it in the back of the magazine.

It saddens me that certain fan magazines use the comic marketplace as their playground, and think they can predict—even dictate— which artists and which books will be hot. Sure, ads and promotions can create initial awareness of a project, perhaps helping to ensure high orders on a first issue, but continued success can only come with quality. No matter what the fan magazines may think, comic readers know a good book— or a bad book— when they see one, and they won't be fooled by hype.

And speaking of hype...

Due to the success of the entire miniseries— not just the "heavily promoted" first issue— Gen13 will be graduating into its own ongoing series, on sale as soon as this miniseries ends. Look for Gen13 #6 in your comic stores in October, hot on the heels of #5 (the last issue of the miniseries) in early July and #0 in August .

I know that it was you guys— the fans and readers out there and not any self-promoting fan magazines— that made Gen13 the success it is today. I'd like to thank all of you for picking up the book and giving it a read. It makes all the long hours and late nights Alex, Brandon, and I (and our dedicated support staff at Homage Studios) have put into this book seem worthwhile.

Jeff Scott Campbell
Who will never, ever be on the Wizard top ten list. Ever.